

City of Cambridge
Community Development Department

Retail Land Use Zoning Recommendations

September 2020

CAMBRIDGE
CDD@344
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
344 Broadway





Objectives of Retail Zoning Initiative

- Consistently define all retail use types
- Add use types that are not listed
- Regulate “hybrid” activities
- Plan for unforeseen use types
- Consider relaxing some requirements (parking, change of use, & etc.)
- Revise allowed home-based businesses



Suggested Text Amendments

- Home Occupations (Art. 4.000):
 - Retail Residential Kitchens and Cottage Food Production
- Retail or Consumer Service Establishments:
 - Definitions (Art. 2.000)
 - Use Regulations (Art. 4.000)
 - Parking Exemption (Art. 6.000)
 - Special Permit Criteria (Art. 10.000)



Home Occupations

Home Occupation. For an occupation customarily carried on at home, the use of a room in a dwelling as an office, studio, or work room by a person residing on the premises and in connection with which there is kept no stock in trade nor commodity sold on the premises.



Home Occupations

Current Zoning Allows:

“A customary home occupation or the office of a resident physician, dentist, attorney-at-law, architect, engineer, properly licensed massage therapist, or member of other recognized profession shall be considered as an accessory use, provided that no more than three persons shall practice or be employed on the premises at any one time. In the case of a massage therapist, no more than one person shall practice or be employed on the premises at any one time.”

Suggested Amendment Allows:

- Professional office (up to three workers on premises)
- Licensed massage therapist
- Artist home studio
- Retail Residential Kitchen

Requirements:

- Primary practitioner is a residential occupant of the dwelling unit
- No more than one person is practicing or employed on the premises at any one time unless otherwise specified
- All activities take place entirely within a building
- No offensive noise, vibration, smoke, dust or other particulate matter, heat, humidity, glare, or other objectionable effects are produced
- Accessory and incidental to the primary residential use

Retail Residential Kitchens

- Residents will be allowed to use their primary residence for a Cottage Food Operation [See Massachusetts State Sanitary Code Chapter X \(105 CMR 590.10\)](#)
- Cottage Food Operation: A person who produces Cottage Food Products (e.g., jams, baked goods) only in the residential kitchen of that person's primary residence and only for sale directly to the consumer (which includes events like farmers markets, craft fairs, sales by mail). Products must be prepackaged prior to sale with an ingredient label.
- Staff have started to work on a new Cottage Food Permit and webpage with information for residents





Retail or Consumer Service Establishments

Retail or Consumer Service Establishment. An establishment whose principal purpose is the commercial provision of goods, personal services, prepared food and beverage, entertainment, recreational activities, and similar services (but excluding professional or financial services) directly to consumers. Such provision of goods and consumer services shall be conducted on-site, but may be supplemented by telephone and online transactions and delivery services.

Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Establishment. An establishment otherwise meeting the definition of a Retail or Consumer Service Establishment but for which sales and/or services are customarily conducted partly or wholly outdoors.

Retail or Consumer Service Establishments

Retail Business or Consumer Service Establishment, not otherwise defined	
<i>Stores</i>	Convenience Store (amended)
	Merchandise Store
	Grocery Store (new)
	Craft Retail and Production Shop (amended)
<i>Personal Services</i>	Bakery, Retail
	Personal Services Establishment (consolidated)
	Restaurant (consolidated)
	Bar
<i>Food and Beverage</i>	Craft Beverage Establishment (new)
	Food Stand or Kiosk (new)
	Food Hall (new)
	Fast Order or Quick Service Food Establishment (amended)
	Dance Hall or Nightclub (amended)
<i>Entertainment and Recreation</i>	Theater
	Commercial Recreation Establishment
	Fitness Center (new)
<i>Special Retail</i>	Funeral Home
	Animal Services Facility
	Indoor Auto Sales Facility
<i>Arts</i>	Cannabis Retail Store
	Art/Craft Studio
	Performing Arts Studio (new)
Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Establishment, not otherwise defined	
<i>Outdoor Retail</i>	Open-Lot Retail Sales Establishment (amended)
	Drive-In Food Service Establishment
	Drive-In Consumer Service Establishment
	Outdoor Entertainment and Recreation Facility (amended)
	Drive-In Theater
	Outdoor Auto Sales Facility
	Auto Service Station
	Auto Wash
	Temporary Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Use (new)

“Hybrid” Retail

- Secondary retail uses within another non-residential use
- Limited to 25% of floor area or 25% of hours of operation
- No additional parking, loading, signage requirements
- Primarily for occupants/patrons of the larger principal use

Permitted Uses	Examples
Sales	Supplies, promotional materials
Programs and Services	Classes, presentations, minor repairs
Food and Beverage	Concession stand
Entertainment and Recreation	Performances, games

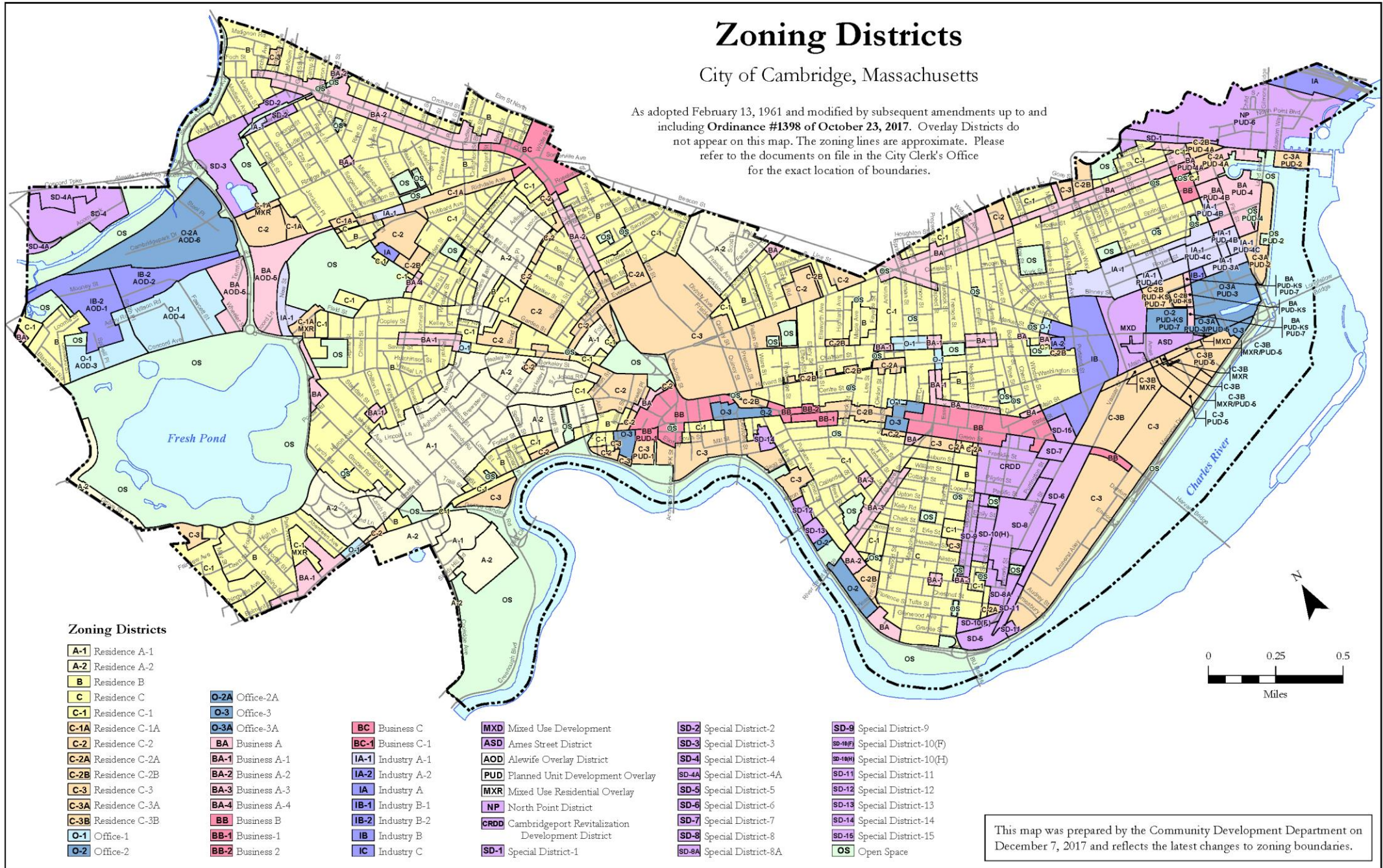
Principal Use Regulations

	Zoning District 1	Zoning District 2
Use Type 1	<p>Yes “permitted” “as-of-right”</p>	<p>Yes¹ “permitted, with limitations” “as-of-right, with limitations”</p>
Use Type 2	<p>SP “special permit” “conditional”</p>	<p>No “not permitted” “prohibited” “variance”*</p>

Zoning Districts

City of Cambridge, Massachusetts

As adopted February 13, 1961 and modified by subsequent amendments up to and including Ordinance #1398 of October 23, 2017. Overlay Districts do not appear on this map. The zoning lines are approximate. Please refer to the documents on file in the City Clerk's Office for the exact location of boundaries.



Zoning Districts

A-1 Residence A-1	O-2A Office-2A	BC Business C	MXD Mixed Use Development	SD-2 Special District-2	SD-9 Special District-9
A-2 Residence A-2	O-3 Office-3	BC-1 Business C-1	ASD Ames Street District	SD-3 Special District-3	SD-10(F) Special District-10(F)
B Residence B	O-3A Office-3A	IA-1 Industry A-1	AOD Alewife Overlay District	SD-4 Special District-4	SD-10(H) Special District-10(H)
C Residence C	BA Business A	IA-2 Industry A-2	PUD Planned Unit Development Overlay	SD-5 Special District-5	SD-11 Special District-11
C-1 Residence C-1	BA-1 Business A-1	IB-1 Industry B-1	MXR Mixed Use Residential Overlay	SD-6 Special District-6	SD-12 Special District-12
C-1A Residence C-1A	BA-2 Business A-2	IB-2 Industry B-2	NP North Point District	SD-7 Special District-7	SD-13 Special District-13
C-2 Residence C-2	BA-3 Business A-3	IB Industry B	CRDD Cambridgeport Revitalization Development District	SD-8 Special District-8	SD-14 Special District-14
C-2A Residence C-2A	BA-4 Business A-4	IC Industry C	SD-1 Special District-1	SD-8A Special District-8A	SD-15 Special District-15
C-2B Residence C-2B	BB Business B				OS Open Space
C-3 Residence C-3	BB-1 Business-1				
C-3A Residence C-3A	BB-2 Business 2				
C-3B Residence C-3B					
O-1 Office-1					
O-2 Office-2					

This map was prepared by the Community Development Department on December 7, 2017 and reflects the latest changes to zoning boundaries.

Principal Use Regulations

District Types	General Approach
Business Districts Industry Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Retail generally allowed• Special permit where site-specific impacts are a concern
Office Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ground-story retail allowed in mixed-use development• Special permit in Office-1
Residential Districts (excl. 1-family)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Special permit for limited retail types in pre-existing non-residential spaces

Category	Use Type	Business Districts	Industry Districts	Office Districts	Residential Districts (multifamily)
Stores	Retail Business or Consumer Service Establishment, not otherwise defined	Special Permit	Special Permit	No	No
	Convenience Store	Yes	Yes	Ground story	SP – Existing Space
	Merchandise Store	Yes	Yes	Ground story	No
	Grocery Store	Yes	Yes	Ground story	SP – Existing Space
	Craft Retail and Production Shop	Special Permit	Yes	Ground story	No
	Bakery, Retail	Yes	Yes	Ground story	No
Personal Services	Personal Services Establishment	Yes	Yes	Ground story	SP – Existing Space
Food and Beverage	Restaurant	Yes	Yes	Ground story	No
	Bar	Yes	Yes/Special Permit	Ground story	No
	Craft Beverage Establishment	Special Permit	Yes	Special Permit	No
	Food Stand or Kiosk	Yes/Special Permit	Yes	Ground story	No
	Food Hall	Yes/Special Permit	Yes	Special Permit	No
	Fast Order or Quick Service Food Establishment	Yes/Special Permit	Yes/Special Permit	Ground story	SP – Existing Space
Entertainment and Recreation	Dance Hall or Nightclub	Yes/Special Permit	Yes/Special Permit	Ground story	No
	Theater	Yes/Special Permit	Yes/Special Permit	Ground story	No
	Commercial Recreation Establishment	Yes/Special Permit	Yes/Special Permit	Ground story	No
	Fitness Center	Yes	Yes	Ground story	SP – Existing Space

Category	Use Type	Business Districts	Industry Districts	Office Districts	Residential Districts (multifamily)
<i>Special Retail</i>	Funeral Home	Yes	Yes	Special Permit	No
	Animal Services Facility	Special Permit	Special Permit	Special Permit	No
	Indoor Auto Sales Facility	Yes	Yes/Special Permit	Ground story	No
	Cannabis Retail Store	Special Permit	Special Permit	No	No
<i>Arts</i>	Art/Craft Studio	Yes	Yes	Special Permit	Special Permit
	Performing Arts Studio	Yes	Yes	Special Permit	Special Permit
<i>Outdoor Retail</i>	Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Establishment, not otherwise defined	Special Permit	Special Permit	No	No
	Open-Lot Retail Sales Establishment	Yes	Yes	Ground story	No
	Drive-In Food Service Establishment	Special Permit/No	Special Permit/No	No	No
	Drive-In Consumer Service Establishment	Special Permit/No	Special Permit/No	No	No
	Outdoor Entertainment and Recreation Facility	Special Permit/No	Special Permit	Ground story	No
	Drive-In Theater	Special Permit/No	Yes/No	No	No
	Outdoor Auto Sales Facility	Special Permit/No	Special Permit/No	No	No
	Auto Service Station	Special Permit	Yes/SP/No	No	No
	Auto Wash	Special Permit/No	Special Permit/No	No	No
	Temporary Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Use	Yes	Yes	Yes	Special Permit



Parking Exemption

Small business exemption provides relief from parking requirements in many cases (Section 6.32.1).

Current Zoning

Parking requirement waived for any non-residential use in office, business, or industrial district requiring up to 4 spaces, in a building with up to 10,000 square feet total non-residential use.

Suggested Change

Additionally, do not require new parking for any non-residential use occupying space in an existing building.

Special Permit Criteria

*Special permits will normally be granted where specific provisions of this Ordinance are met, **except** when particulars of the location or use, not generally true of the district or of the uses permitted in it, would cause granting of such permit to be to the **detriment of the public interest** because:*

General SP Considerations (current)	Retail Considerations (proposed)
Zoning requirements	Delivery and loading operations
Congestion, hazard, or change in neighborhood character due to traffic	Environmental nuisance to neighbors – dust, odors, smoke, noise, light
Adverse effect on adjacent uses	Compatibility of façade with visual character of the area
Nuisance or hazard to occupants or citizens	Meeting objectives in citywide or area plans
Integrity of district, intent of zoning	
Urban Design Objectives	



Next Steps

- Feedback from Economic Development Committee
- Follow-through of changes in other parts of the Zoning Ordinance



Thank You!